

Members

Sen. Richard Bray, Chairperson
Sen. David Ford
Sen. William Alexa
Sen. Timothy Lanane
Rep. Robert Kuzman
Rep. Dale Sturtz
Rep. Ralph Ayres
Rep. Kathy Richardson
Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard
Judge Ernest Yelton
C. Joseph Anderson, Jr.
William Overdeer
Sarah M. Taylor



COMMISSION ON COURTS

Legislative Services Agency
200 West Washington Street, Suite 301
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2789
Tel: (317) 232-9588 Fax: (317) 232-2554

LSA Staff:

George T. Angelone, Attorney for the
Commission
Mark Goodpaster, Fiscal Analyst for the
Commission

Authority: IC 33-1-15

MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: September 7, 2000
Meeting Time: 1:30 P.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington
St., Room 404
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 3

Members Present: Sen. Richard Bray, Chairperson; Sen. David Ford; Sen. Timothy Lanane; Rep. Kathy Richardson; Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard (represented by his designee David Remondini); Judge Ernest Yelton; C. Joseph Anderson, Jr.; William Overdeer; Sarah M. Taylor.

Members Absent: Sen. William Alexa; Rep. Robert Kuzman; Rep. Dale Sturtz; Rep. Ralph Ayres.

Senator Bray convened the meeting. Minutes from the August 17th meeting were distributed and approved as written.

Mark Goodpaster, Fiscal Analyst for the Commission, presented a report comparing the amount of money received by the state from court fees and the amount expended by the state for court officer salaries (available from the Legislative Information Center as Exhibit

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly home page. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

1). He noted that state expenditures exceeded state receipts from court fees.

Larry Landis, Director of the Public Defender Council, reported on the state of the public defense fund. He indicated that the fund is used to reimburse participating counties for expenditures made to provide attorneys to indigent person accused of a crime. He said that \$2,400,000 is annually set aside from court fees for this fund. This amount is inadequate to meet projected claims for this year. He indicated that it is unlikely that claims will diminish in future years.

Judge Mary Lee Comer, Hendricks Superior No. 1, made a presentation on behalf of the Indiana Judges Association. She is currently president of the association. Judge Comer showed a video entitled "The Faces of Indiana Justice". She introduced Judge Nancy Harris Vaidik, Court of Appeals, Judge Viola Tafiaferro, Monroe Circuit Court, and Judge Charles Pratt, Allen Superior Court and talked about their involvement in the profession and the community.

She urged the Commission to support an increase in judicial salaries. She said that judicial salaries had not increased since 1995. She suggested that competitive salaries are needed to attract and retain good judges.

In response to a question from Sarah Taylor, she indicated that judicial salaries are paid by the state. However, an increase in judicial salaries would affect county spending for fringe benefits and for other officials whose salaries are tied to judicial salaries. In response to a question from Sen. Lanane, she indicated that there were either 312 or 313 judges. Sen. Bray asked how the state should fund judicial salary increases. Judge Comer suggested that the money should come from the state general fund without regard to the amount of court fees raised. However, she said that she was willing to discuss other ways of raising the money.

Judge Lonnie Randolph, East Chicago City Court, urged the Commission to increase the civil jurisdictional limit for tort and contract cases filed in the city and town courts in Lake County. He suggested that they be raised to the same level as the small claims courts in Marion County, which is \$6,000.

Sen Bray adjourned the meeting at 2:45 pm.